/88 cont./

583 for himself a woman who was worth so much; also his outlay will
565 be compensated by the payment he will receive for the first daughter who marries, which will be identical with what he paid for her mother.

583 Another interesting point is the regulating aspect the payment has on the moral and social conduct of a woman before marriage, since it obliges her indirectly to accept and comply with all the determined ethical and social norms, without which her value as a future wife would go down. For example, when the woman belongs to a high class, she must not accept proposals to elope with a man who loves her but who lacks sufficient money to buy her. This is allowed, however, in women of a lower social class who have no standing to lose, where there is not sufficient force to back the claims their relatives might make, and where their value as wives is not constant but varies, depending almost always on the financial capacity of the buyer and very often on the economic situation at the moment. In summer /the dry season/, for example, things get so bad in these lower classes that a woman can be bought for a little corn.

582 These facts give rise to a certain stabilization of the existing difference of status, for the women of high class can only be bought by men of the same or better position, which limits in this way the possibilities of acquiring a rich woman and prevents high-class family groups being mixed with poor groups or those of a lesser social standing.

583 A woman who wants to maintain her standing cannot run away with a man and be paid for later. This implies that the man, after a time, if he is not satisfied, can repudiate her for this act alone, paying only for having abused her, which, if of little importance to a woman of low social standing, is definitely very important for one of high standing. Also, if the compensation claim is not met peacefully or if the payment is not made, war may be provoked between her group and that of her husband, and all the consequences fall on her. It can also happen that the man, in view of the accomplished fact, may wish to take advantage of a

/90 cont./

583 stipulated time, the woman's family takes her back again without any claims allowed from the man. But if some time later the man wants to pay what is owing, he enters into conversation with his affinal relatives who, once they have received the necessary amount, hand his wife back to him.

The distribution of payments obtained through different forms of marriage other than the traditional one will be seen as they are studied in detail.

Payment for childbirth and pregnancy. Apart from the price
583 of the woman the man must pay, whether the relationship is legal
262 or illegal, for the inconveniences caused by pregnancy and delivery. This payment is made in cows or other animals to the woman's family, who can use these animals for slaughter or sell them or include them in the family herd. But the woman may not eat the flesh of these animals which are given in payment for the troubles she suffered during pregnancy, for the blood she spilled, and for the pains she bore during delivery, because they represent a payment of her very being and are identified with her. To eat them would be almost like eating her own flesh or something similar, and for this reason she cannot have any part of them, either directly or indirectly. /91/

Marriage before puberty. At the present time a man contracts
583 marriage for the first time when he has obtained his economic
582 emancipation when he is about nineteen. His subsequent marriages are the result of his inclination and the opportunities he may have to buy other women.

As a general rule, women marry when they have passed puberty and the period of seclusion. However, a very general custom existed, and to some extent still exists, in regions which because of their geographical situation were inaccessible to the white man and the missionary, but now tends to disappear: the purchase of impuberal girls about ten years old (who have not yet developed physically nor passed through the traditional ceremonies of seclusion) by rich Indians, already old, who have a considerable number of wives. These old men pay a price which

/91 cont./

583 582 satisfies the girl's parents, who, attracted by the economic possibilities of their future son-in-law, arrange the marriage without consulting the wishes of the impuberal child, although they sometimes try to persuade her, making her see the advantageous situation such a marriage may ensure. The girl in many cases has a child before her first menstruation appears.

It is said in La Guajira that old men practice this custom because they derive more sexual incentive from young and undeveloped feminine figures, and this prolongs their masculine potency.

583 177 Marriage of Guajiro women with civilizados. With very few exceptions intermarriage is carried out between Indians and civilizados /nonnatives/. It is of two kinds, temporary and permanent, in accordance with the length of stay of the civilizado man in the peninsula and is nearly always limited to the Guajiro law of marriage by purchase of the woman.

The temporary marriages consist of unions established between traders or civil or military authorities who must stay some time in the peninsula, having come alone and finding in the purchase of a native woman the solution of their personal problems. They live with the woman they have bought, adapting themselves to the norms of life in La Guajira, and have children who, according to legal tradition, do not belong to them. As their obligation to their family is so limited and the maternal relatives have continued to give backing to the woman, they can go away at any moment, as indeed they do, without altering the life of the home that they founded, because the woman has not been uprooted, as in the case of a Catholic marriage, from her social institutions nor her relatives, who, once the marriage is dissolved /92/ by the definite absence of the white element, take her back again into their midst. The woman continues to sustain the family and bring it up under the protection and counsel of her maternal relatives, since very frequently nothing is ever again heard of the father. Sometimes they marry again or live with another man.

Permanent marriages are effected with civilizado men who, having definitely settled in the country, sometimes decide to get

/93 cont./

177 595 848 birth in such a way that they are never placed outside the pale of the law. This may be due to the uterine line of kinship in which the father does not count in the recognition of children.

In these cases of marriage between whites and Guajiro women there also occurs a union of these two ideas. The white man [583] refuses to buy the woman or legitimize their union through the necessary traditional proceedings demanded by her culture. The refusal to comply with the main traditional requisite makes the man unacceptable, and he is considered an intruder.

The children, illegitimate /94/ according to the paternal mentality, meet a natural reluctance among their mother's relatives, who however in the long run have to accept them.

582 Consanguineous marriage. Although the Guajiro community is in an obvious process of disintegration, there is a characteristic which is strongly maintained: exogamy, which, at the present time, does not mean the prohibition of marriage within the same clan group, but within a limited circle of close consanguineous kin: brothers /and sisters, hermanos/, uncles /and aunts, tíos/, and ascendants in the female line. Thus today in La Guajira we find marriages between individuals of the same clan, since the tie has weakened so much that although they belong to the same clan group, they do not consider themselves relatives.

If the marriage takes place within the small family circle, the opinion of society and of the relatives is never favorable. They cannot explain why nor wish to accept that an individual should marry a consanguineal kin included among those just mentioned. Their magical beliefs reinforce this, because these beliefs establish the prohibition that a man must not marry a relative, or he will be come bald.

582 596 Guajiro mentality cannot accept as natural the marriage of a woman to her maternal uncle. This would be incest at its worst, because the maternal uncle has the position that a father has with us. There was a case, and a similar attitude has always been observed in like cases, of a Guajiro girl who had sexual relations with her maternal uncle. After pregnancy became

/94 cont./

582 588 evident, a Catholic missionary married them according to the Catholic ritual. This act seemed a crime to the natives: that a Guajiro woman should be legally married to her maternal uncle was impossible to understand. Rumors and a kind of social vacuum began to surround the pair, and even threats, to the point that, seeing life was becoming impossible for them among their own people, they abandoned all they possessed and migrated to a distance, where there would be no Guajiro who knew their story, in order that they might not have to put up with the social situation which their illegal conduct toward their traditions had provoked.

582 The pure Guajiro is the one who preserves in its most extreme form the principles of exogamy among the different family groups. Mestizo men, educated and influenced by the kinship principles followed by whites, reduce the wideness of the scope of this prohibition against the marriage of individuals within the same clan and marry /95/ female first cousins in the maternal line, defying the natural revulsion of the Indians who still consider such unions incestuous.

835 We must note again that it is not rare for girls before puberty to cohabit with their own brothers (in the Guajiro sense) and with their father, naturally without pregnancy as a consequence, but with the loss of their virginity. Guajiro mythology contains a [773] story of a girl who, having become pregnant by her own father, overcome by her physical condition and the social ostracism which her action had provoked, hanged herself, thus establishing this type of suicide as a means of a woman's doing away with herself when her wishes are opposed, especially in cases where she is obliged to marry a man whom she dislikes or in circumstances similar to those in the story.

These incestuous sexual relations are frequent in nearly every part of La Guajira. They happen when little girls go from one settlement to another carrying a message or to the woods in search of the pack animals or of fruit, at the same time that the boys are there looking after the livestock. Usually these relations cannot be considered as a violation, as the girls consent willingly, a state

/163 cont./

592 836 lead him to pay for abuse or to marriage. In these days prostitution of the Guajiro woman frees the man from these legal dangers and gives him, as it does to bachelors in our society, free access to women before marriage without the attendant unfavorable consequences of previous times.

592 582 The Guajiro man marries for the first time at an age that varies between seventeen and the maximum of twenty-five, an age which coincides with his economic independence from the family nucleus. With his own livestock and with the gifts he receives from his relatives, he buys a woman but remains in debt to his family until he can repay them by the sale of the first of his daughters in marriage. Once his wife has been handed over, he begins his marital life, (some times, when the marriage has been by abduction, he starts beforehand), traditionally in the maternal home from which place, as the [591] family increases, the new cell will move to the father's hamlet /ranchería/ where the young couple will build their own home, or they will make it in the wife's hamlet.

592 611 602 The first child of this union is born, as a general rule, at the wife's home, that is, in that of her maternal relatives, and the mother is attended by her mother or her aunts, or by her grandmother in the maternal line, or when these are not available, by her married sisters. Nowadays the services of a midwife are employed. This child belongs to the maternal house as it is of their blood, since the mother is the one who transmits this quality, and even if the birth of the child is not preceded by a union legal in the concept of the Guajiro, the consanguineous tie does not differ in its transmission. It is always the mother who transmits this characteristic, and being hers and in no /164/ way counting on the father, the child not only takes the maternal surname but is also included within the kinship circle to which his mother belongs. Thus we have:

1. His legitimate feminine ascendants are his mother, maternal grandmother, and maternal great-grandmother, etc.

2. Also, the maternal aunts in different degrees are his relatives.

/176 cont./

178 602 614 In the second place, we observed a limitation in the exercise of the clan's function. The concept of consanguineous kinship between all its members has relaxed to the point that consanguineous ties are considered to exist only among the closest relatives. An individual's kinsmen have become limited to his mother and her female ascendant, and to his mother's brothers and sisters together with their offspring. Some extend kinship to include relatives of the fourth degree of collaterality, and then to the brothers, sisters, and their descendants. By limiting the concept of kinship, all obligations attached to those no longer considered consanguineous are lost. Consequently, clan unity begins to disintegrate.

178 797 602 614 Another change in the concept of kinship has been introduced by Catholic marriage. It implies the abolition of the uterine affiliation, the basis of clan organization. It introduces the paternal branch into the kinship system and places it on a superior plane since the father's name and not the mother's, as it was traditionally, comes first in the offspring. /According to the Spanish custom of compound surnames, one's father's surname comes first. --Ed./ Furthermore, it destroys the authority and predominance of the maternal uncle because that of the father replaces and surpasses it.

178 614 582 5. Exogamy. The Guajiro clan was essentially exogamous. Acculturation has made marriage possible and legal between members of the same clan. In other words, clan exogamy has disappeared, and only family exogamy is followed.

614 423 178 6. Location. With respect to clan settlement the myths already quoted resolve the problem by assigning fixed regions to each of the groups which Mareiwa created. These lands are held in common by each clan, which also works them communally. The /177/ improvements introduced, such as roads, wells, and cemeteries, are made with the assistance of all the clan members who will make use of them. At the present time individual solution of the water problem has permitted the splitting up of the communal pasturage land. Furthermore, there is a strong trend toward the breaking up of agricultural land.

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177 582 We also saw in the section referring to marriage that the individual who goes to La Guajira and seeks to marry has two ways of doing so: by following the traditional norm of La Guajira, that is, buying the woman in accordance with the conventional payment and in agreement with the girl's parents and submiting to all the regulations in force regarding marriage, or marrying in the Catholic church, in this case causing the woman to break away from all the norms of her culture and from her society to the point of her being no longer considered a member of the same and in consequence finding herself excluded from all the guarantees that this same society can offer her in any case of difficulty or conflict with her husband or with other groups distinct from her own clan group. Although many make use of this second form of marriage, the majority do marry by the Guajiro ritual, although they may introduce certain changes and frequently do not comply with all the laws and obligations which form part of the primary institution of traditional Guajiro marriage.

177 As most of the inhabitants of the Colombian and Venezuelan coast are negroid, as we have just stated, and for this reason /240/ have a past of considerably superstitious and magic traditions, it is logical that they are readily influenced by the beliefs which dominate the Guajiro mentality. It is for this reason that these people are so eager to buy different kinds of magic charms and so strict in the observance of set norms of conduct related to the totality of Guajiro magic practices.

III

Culture, therefore, has suffered appreciable changes which have considerably altered the traditional conformation. But this change has not taken place in isolation. It has developed in unison with a transformation of society as a whole, which is also outstanding. The mixing /mestizaje/ of

3: Wilbert E-5 (ca. 1957) 1958 SC13 Goajiro SC13

582 As for the sanctioned forms of cousin marriage, Ego (m. and f.) may marry any cousins on either side except for mother's sister's children. Ego (m. and f.) may also marry any kinsman of the third degree with the exception of a mother's sister's daughter's child. All relatives of the fourth degree are potential spouses. [595] Polygyny is practiced and is definitely a mark of status and rank. Sororate is sanc- [554] tioned although it very rarely occurs. The data indicate, then, a very typical system [587] of Crow type.

602 No avoidance taboos were said to exist in Goajiro society, but great attention is paid to respectful behavior between kinsmen. In the family parents are respected [593] equally highly by the children, whereas among siblings the brother enjoys greater authority than his sisters, and an elder than a younger brother. In the presence of the maternal uncle nobody is supposed to speak up unquestioned; this rule applies especially to the younger people. Grandparents maintain close and friendly relations with their grandchildren. They make gifts to the latter: horses, bows and [43] arrows, drums, rifles, etc., and the grandchildren assist the old after having grown up. The father-in-law is respected greatly by his daughter-in-law. When visiting she serves him before she serves her mother-in-law. She does not, however, attend her own mother. Cousins are completely free to meet without being obliged to observe any avoidance regulations.

608 Artificial kin relations were said to be missing altogether among the Goajiro. 609 Non-relatives are treated with great friendliness and may even be accepted as 597 step-parents of an orphan of the group. Orphans usually join a family on the father's side.

CARACAS, VENEZUELA

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

881 invitation. Again cattle are butchered, and there is drinking
584 and dancing and horse-racing. Numbers of men come to see if they would like to put themselves forward as suitors. The more eminent guests are received in the house itself, and the girl is now present. Her shorn hair has grown and been trimmed to a page-boy cut, and she wears her best clothes
[754 and new ornaments. She hides her hair clippings carefully
826] in a bag, for she does not want to risk anyone getting hold of them and using them to acquire power over her by the arts of magic. Later, she will secretly bury them under a
[789 cow pat. That will help to increase her herds. The droppings
514] of various animals play a great part in the magic of the Guajiro, and it would seem that there is negro influence here as well.

881 The girl has now been born again—she is a new person, a woman. She knows all that an adult woman needs to know and can do everything that a wife and mother should be able to do. Pale and lovely, she steps out into life once more and inquisitive young men swarm round her. The rich give a big feast, the poor provide simpler fare, but it is always a great occasion.

[582] A Guajiro man will never marry a girl before she has undergone this period of confinement, which means that people seldom marry too early. It is said that in the old days
[595 rich old men with several wives sometimes bought little
831] poor girls as concubines, believing that that would enhance their virility.

The girl's long segregation is intended to protect her from the supernatural dangers that are thought to threaten her, especially during this sensitive period of transition from childhood to womanhood. The girl can also be dangerous to others through being exposed to attack by spirits. It is only practical that during this period she should practise handicrafts.

262 Going back to the house, we found the women at the
[354] fires, which there were protected by special small cactus screens. There was no need to have them under a roof at that time of the year, only to shelter them from the wind. The pots stood over the fire supported on three stones.

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

riage. A Guajiro woman has no right to sell her body. The law does not recognize prostitution.

A married woman's relatives and clan do not leave her entirely in her husband's hands. He may not do as he likes with her, nor cause her suffering. Suffering and discomfort she is bound to experience in childbirth, however, and of that he is the primary cause; thus whether as a result of legal or illegal relations, the man must compensate the mother for her confinement by giving her family a few cattle. The woman herself may not eat their meat under any circumstances.

Originally the Guajiro clans were exogamous; members were not allowed to marry within the clan. That is no longer insisted upon, but not only brothers and sisters, but maternal males and cousins on the mother's side, are still reckoned among the forbidden degrees. It is unthinkable that an Indian girl should marry her maternal uncle; that would be like having her father for her husband. It once happened that an uncle and niece had a secret relationship and the girl became pregnant. A monk married them, but the Indians regarded the relationship as a heinous crime and the whole district reacted so violently that the couple had to leave the peninsula and go far away, where there was no risk of meeting members of their tribe.

There is nothing to prevent an Indian getting himself several wives. Infrequently white men have married into Guajiro families and they too have had to pay a bride-price. A number of poor Creoles have contracted Guajiro marriages with poor girls. I have already mentioned how foreign oil workers made Guajiro marriages. In those early days there were no arrangements made for employees' families, and the Guajiro girls suited those primitive conditions very well, though as a rule such marriages with Indian girls were very short-lived, as those of the Creoles with them still are. The girl is soon abandoned, if that can be done without risk, the girl's family in such cases being powerless. So the Indians told me.

The monks had already told us that where Creoles had married Guajiro girls of good family, those marriages had

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

usually lasted. Here, of course, the girl's family had power and the means to check that all was well. In such marriages the husband was considered liable to provide the household equipment, as well as paying a bride-price.

If a Creole marries a Guajiro girl according to the Catholic rites there are all sorts of complications, even if he has paid the bride-price, for the European concept of the father's rights conflicts with the Indian matriarchal law. Problems of relationship and inheritance, the separation of the child from its clan and many other things all provide problems which cause the bride's family a lot of trouble. But that is enough about Indian marriage.

Since all members of a clan are of the same blood, the Indians consider themselves justified in wreaking vengeance on a near relative, if they are unable to lay hands on the actual culprit. This can give rise to a whole chain of acts of vengeance, a real vendetta. In the old days all white people were held to be of one clan, and so the Indians thought that they could avenge an injury inflicted by a white person on the first member of his clan they came across. 'To travel in Guajira is like sitting on a keg of gunpower beside a fire; you are afraid the whole time that a spark will cause a catastrophe', was what used to be said.

Guajiro law always tries to find a scapegoat, and one must remember that when having any dealings with the Indians. If I take a man into my service or merely send him on an errand, I am responsible if anything happens to him and for anything he himself may do to others all the time his mission lasts.

A mother sent her little girl on a donkey to fetch water. The girl took a playmate up on the saddle beside her. The other little girl fell off and hurt herself quite slightly, yet the family had to pay considerable damages.

A mestizo family, receiving unexpected visitors, took an Indian girl to help in the kitchen. The girl cut her finger and her family demanded compensation. After all blood had been shed. The girl was of humble family and thus no large sum could be claimed, yet according to our ideas what had to be paid was a very great deal for a mere cut:

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
SC13 Goajiro SC13

water but is given an herbal purgative. Her hair is cut short. Generally 881
several of her relatives stay around the door of the hut, and strangers and men with an eye to matrimony may look in. During this period the girl is taught the duties of married life and such skills as weaving, sewing, and making hammocks. When she emerges, stout and bleached, a special festival is held, when she resumes her ornaments and puts on the adult clothes that she has made during her confinement. She is now considered marriageable. The length of her confinement depends on her status, though theoretically it lasts until her hair again reaches the [554
nape of her neck. Poor girls are secluded only a few weeks, rich girls 556]
up to 2 years.

Sexual life and marriage.—Little is known about the sexual life of 836
the *Goajiro*. A certain amount of promiscuous love making occurs among the young people at the biweekly festivals. Dances also provide an opportunity for sexual advances.

There are some male transvestites who carry on only female activities 838
and are ridiculed by the men.

When a man desires to marry he sends his father or uncle as inter- 584
mediary, then pays a bride price which has been set by the girl's relatives. 583
The payment is usually in cattle, but goats, pearls, liquor, cotton cloth, 602
and gold ornaments also are used. The father retains the purchase price only when his first daughter marries; the income of subsequent marriages goes to the girl's senior maternal uncles. The mother also receives part of the income. A son obtains the cattle for the bride payment from the increase of his father's herds.

Intermarriage between the sibs is frequent, and many of the *Goajiro* 582
give their daughters to "civilizados" from Maracaibo and Río Hacha, who pay higher prices and find such a tie with the Indians useful in their trading relations.

The marriage ceremony consists of a series of feasts and exchanges of 585
presents between the two families. The wedding night is spent at the [431]
rancheria of the bride's mother, but the nuptial hammock (specially woven by the female relatives of the bride) is hung from a tree some distance away from the house. For a period of days and even months the [604]
bridegroom leaves his bride at dawn and returns only after sunset. In this way the groom shows respect to his mother-in-law.

Polygyny is general. The number of wives depends on the economic 595
status of the husband, some men having as many as 20. Each wife lives in her own house, where her husband occasionally visits her. The man, [592]
as head of the polygynous household, supervises the daily slaughter of animals and the distribution of meat and corn to each household according to the number of its members.

If a wife shirks her domestic duties she may be divorced and her hus- 586
band may claim the return of the bride price cattle, plus their increase and

9: Santa Cruz E-5 (1958) 1960
SC13 Goajiro SC13

the individual who was to provide the raw material for this article. This is more or less a biography of the man who was at the same time guide, interpreter, and driver for the author and with whom extensive conversations, both formal and informal, took place.[2]

Guajiro culture, like most native cultures in the New World, has suffered great acculturation due to the impact with European ways of life. Some of these cultures have been more resistant to change than others; and within one culture, certain aspects have remained closer to the traditional forms than have others. In Guajiro culture, it is perhaps the social organization, with all of its ramifications, that has resisted recent acculturation more than the other aspects of the culture. We know very little of the pre-cattle culture of the Guajiro and even Juan de Castellanos, writing at the beginning of the seventeenth century, describes them as having numerous herds of domestic animals. Nowhere in the literature on the Guajiros is there an example of status having been acquired outside the traditional way and the present writer, in his two field trips to the region, has found only the case here described.

As it is not the purpose of this article to give a full description of the social organization of the Guajiro, it will be sufficient to state that the tribe is divided into some twenty-five matrilineal clans, of which about eleven are large and rather powerful in their socio-economic aspects, and the rest—due mainly to the fact of having a small number of members—are weak, and relatively unimportant. Inheritance is along the mother's line, an individual acquiring property from his maternal uncle. The avunculate in all its social and economic aspects, is a very important institution (Santa Cruz, 1941).

Traditionally the clans are exogamous with incest taboos and punishments for those who break them. This exogamic characteristic of the clan is apparently disappearing, as several cases of endogamous unions were found among the Guajiro living in the outskirts of the city of Maracaibo. No endogamous marriages, however, were found in the Guajiro proper by the present writer, although Gregorio Hernandez de Alba (1936) has

[2] Proper names, especially of the subject, have all been disguised in some way, so as to spare personal feelings.

9: Santa Cruz E-5 (1958) 1960
SC13 Goajiro SC13

reported several in the vicinity of the town of Riohacha in Colombia.

Residence is normally matrilocal, although, at present, there is a tendency towards neo-locality. The author has found no case of patrilocality either in the field or in the literature.

The names of the five more important clans in Guajiro society, and those with which we are concerned in this article are: Uriana, Epinayú, Pushaina, Guajariyú, and Epieyú. These designations have lost meaning in Guajiro and not even the oldest members questioned by the writer remember what they mean. The clans also have an animal or plant totem closely attached to food and hunting taboos. How deep this totemic aspect of the clan goes the writer does not know and the two references found in the literature, A. Ernst (1887) and A. Jahn (1927), simply mention the fact without going into details.

Today the clans have no distinct geographic distribution. Members of the different clans are found scattered more or less at random over the whole peninsula, and in both Colombia and Venezuela. This may be due perhaps to the extensive migrations of families within the region in their quest for water for themselves and their domestic animals. This necessity has also probably contributed to the gradual breakdown of the matrilocal residence. The earlier literature suggests that the clans may have had, at one time, certain regional characteristics. Juan de Castellanos cites that the Guajiros living near what is now the town of Riohacha all belonged to the Uriana clan. A. Ernst goes as far as showing a distribution map of the clans. A. Jahn and G. Hernandez de Alba draw their conclusion of geographic distribution for the clans based on the earlier sources but definitely state that today the clans present the scattered distribution the present writer found.

The Guajiro culture may be described in brief as pastoral, with a small-scale supplementary agriculture, especially in the southern part of the peninsula where water and more fertile lands are available. Domestic animals, cattle in particular, represent the foundation of wealth to the Guajiro. His economic position, and likewise his social status, is measured in the number of cattle, sheep, goats, asses and horses he owns. This pastoral complex permeates practically every aspect of the culture.